

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1-914
A2 Ags

United States Department of Agriculture
Office of Information

FILED

LIBRARY
RECEIVED

★ FEB 15 1941

U. S. Department of Agriculture

AND-14-41

FEB. 14, 1941

Part I - STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Remove this sheet. It is not for circulation or duplication.

AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

AGRICULTURAL DEFENSE SUPPLIES STUDIED BY COMMISSION: The Agricultural Division of the NDAC is beginning a study of the supply of items used in agricultural production, including supplies of fertilizer and the possible demands of the defense program on the supplies normally taken by the farms of the nation. Study of available transport facilities has been under way for several weeks under the direction of Dr. E. O. Melott of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Possibility of using raw cotton in the manufacture of nitro-cellulose in the event of a shortage in cotton linters is being studied. Also being considered are ways and means of obtaining a larger volume of "chemical linters" during the cottonseed crushing season to insure sufficient linters pulp for nitration.

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: BRAZIL: The British have expressed an intention to purchase Brazilian cotton during 1941 to the extent of 1,000,000 pounds sterling above purchases last year. Current orders are running roughly in that proportion but later purchases will depend on prices, terms and other circumstances. The British in many cases are demanding credit terms which the Brazilians consider unreasonably long.

FRANCE: Referring to 1941 crop prospects in unoccupied France, the Ministry of Agriculture pointed out the following unfavorable factors: (1) More than 1,200,000 farm workers are prisoners of war; (2) the available number of draft animals is 20 percent less than required; (3) extremely cold weather in December and January may have affected unfavorably fall-sown grains; (4) fuel reserves for agricultural machinery are being depleted rapidly and there is little hope of supplies being replenished in the near future; (5) spare parts for agricultural machinery cannot be imported, nor can they be manufactured in France because of a shortage of raw materials; and (6) no selected seeds were available for fall sowings.

BELGIUM: Butter and other fats, macaroni and other cereals, eggs, cheese, meat, fish, fowl, peas, potatoes, beans and rice have disappeared from local (Antwerp) markets. There is available in limited amounts only extremely poor quality bread. The Food Control Office states that the Antwerp flour supply will last only two weeks.

The Belgian Minister of Agriculture stated that the nation's food supply situation left much to be desired particularly as regards potatoes, grain and meat. The existing potato shortage was attributed largely to transportation difficulties. He pointed out, however, that large quantities of potatoes are available in Holland and Germany for shipment to Belgium. It was his opinion that with the coming of favorable weather adequate shipments should arrive so that the potato supply would be satisfactorily guaranteed. With respect to grain supplies, the Minister emphasized that the existing shortage is expected to be remedied in the near future. The German and Belgian authorities, he added, are endeavoring to supply the population with needed quantities of bread grain. To improve the supply of meat, which in recent months has been impaired largely by illicit trade, it is planned to make a complete reorganization of the marketing system. Noticeable results of the new arrangements, he declared, could be

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Remove this sheet. It is not for circulation or duplication.

expected before the end of this month.

SPAIN: An American official driving by car from Badajoz in Spain to Algeciras by way of Sevilla and Cadiz, reports as follows: "The food situation became progressively worse the farther south I went, with a complete absence along my route of potatoes and most green vegetables, a great dearth of sugar, butter and fats and an entire lack of white flour. At San Fernando, outside of Cadiz, no bread whatsoever was available in the restaurants, and the meat served was already in a state of decomposition. At the Cristina Hotel in Algeciras, a stone's throw from Gibraltar, and one of the finest hotels in Spain, I was informed that bread was available only two or three days out of each month and then only in very small quantities. While I saw no cases of starvation comparable with those encountered in the Russian famine area in 1921 malnutrition was very evident."

United States Department of Agriculture
Office of Information

AND-14-41
Feb.14,1941

Part II - FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE

AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

MECHANICS TRAINED IN RURAL POLYTECHNIC SCHOOLS: More than 3,000 rural polytechnic high schools, scattered throughout the United States, are now training rural youth and adults as mechanics as a part of the national defense program. Between 6,000 and 8,000 schools are expected to be offering mechanical courses by July 1. Those attending classes, usually held at night, are given instruction in the general field of mechanics to help fit them in defense industries. Forty-seven States have approved the program and approval by the last State is expected soon. The program was proposed by Dr. H. C. Ramsower, Ohio State Extension Director, and is sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education and the National Defense Commission.

NAVY INCLUDES NICARAGUAN PINE IN BIDS FOR LUMBER: As a move toward hemisphere cooperation, the Navy will include Nicaraguan pine as approved heavy timber for construction of shipways. Bids will be requested soon. The Navy's decision was made on the recommendation of the Forest Service after T. R. C. Wilson, structural timber expert from the Forest Products Laboratory, had inspected a consignment of Nicaraguan slash pine in New York and pronounced it equal in quality to the slash pine grown in this country. It is expected that funds from any sales of timber to the U. S. would be used by the Nicaraguans to buy products in the U. S., probably wheat.

NATIONAL NUTRITION CONGRESS PLANNED FOR SPRING: Plans for a national nutrition congress in Washington early this spring, attended by representatives of Federal and State agencies as well as professional and technical groups engaged in diet and nutrition activities, are being worked out under the supervision of Food Coordinator McNutt. Assisting with the plans are Dr. Helen Mitchell, Nutrition Consultant, recently transferred to the Coordinator's office from the Extension Service, and Miss Gay Shepperson, assistant to the Coordinator. M. L. Wilson, Director of the Extension Service, is chairman of the committee on nutrition.

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: UNITED KINGDOM: Conferences are being held between government authorities and representatives of employers and employees in the cotton industry regarding curtailment of production to conserve shipping space and to free labor for munitions work. Among various cotton control measures under consideration at present are: (1) organized purchasing of raw cotton in producing countries and regulated distribution to spinners; (2) concentration of production of goods for the Government and for export in efficient mills, and the curtailment of production for the home market to a minimum; (3) closing down of surplus plants and the transfer of workers in such plants to munitions factories; (4) centralized control of prices throughout the industry; and (5) centralizing of the textile export sales through the British Overseas Cottons, Ltd., and its representatives abroad.

NEW ZEALAND: Due to the increasing need for prompt and large shipments of butter, cheese and meat to the United Kingdom, additional mechanical loading equipment is being installed at seaports and an expansion in refrigerated storage facilities is under way.

Authorization was received from the British Wool Control to ship 25,000 bales of American style 56 to 58 wool from New Zealand to the United States. This is the first authorization for shipment of wool from New Zealand direct to a neutral country since the outbreak of the war in September 1939. Arrangements for shipping the wool will be made as soon as orders from American firms are received and accepted. The wool is fine quality half-bred and Corriedale.

CANADA: Provincial Premier Hepburn announced the recommendation of a two-day conference of Provincial officials and producer representatives for the payment of a subsidy to Ontario farmers of 50 cents per hog for grade B-1 and of \$1.00 per hog for grade A, the subsidy to be contingent upon an appropriation by the Ontario Government of \$1,500,000. The Conference also recommended the acceptance in principle of the Federal Government's offer to share in the cost of bringing 3,200,000 bushels of feed grain from Fort William to Ontario destinations at a cost to the Ontario Government of about \$200,000. The object of such subsidies is to encourage increased hog production for marketing during the first part of 1942.

